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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE UNITED NATIONS OPERATION IN MOZAMBIQUE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Two years after the signing of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique in Rome on 4 October 1992, important results have been achieved in maintaining peace in Mozambique and preparing for the country's first multi-party elections. Despite the many difficulties encountered in this formidable process, Mozambique is now ready to hold these elections as scheduled, on 27 and 28 October 1994. Although the Security Council has not specifically requested an additional report, the present report is presented in order to bring the Council up to date, on the eve of the elections, on the latest developments in Mozambique.

II. CURRENT STATUS OF THE PEACE PROCESS AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE ELECTIONS

2. Significant progress has been achieved on all fronts since my last report to the Security Council on 26 August 1994 (S/1994/1002). Having reviewed the status of the peace process, I believe that essential conditions now exist for holding free and fair elections. Despite some apparent tension in recent weeks, there has been no violation of the cease-fire for many months; voter registration has concluded in an orderly manner; and the electoral campaign is now in its most active phase. More than 75,000 soldiers have been demobilized and a unified army comprising approximately 10,000 soldiers has been formed. The number of incidents of violent rioting in the country has significantly decreased and the political situation is relatively calm. These are important achievements.

3. On the negative side, however, the atmosphere during the electoral campaign has been tense and armed banditry has become widespread. This situation is exacerbated by the continuing proliferation of weapons despite the fact that, as of 11 October 1994, 111,539 weapons had been collected from troops of the two parties and 43,491 from the paramilitary forces.

4. After two extensions, voter registration, which started on 1 June 1994, ended on 2 September, with 6,396,061 voters having been registered. This represents 81 per cent of an estimated eligible population of 7,894,850. Some

technical errors occurred during the initial phases of the registration process, but these were primarily a result of a lack of clear instructions to, or training of, the registration teams. This situation was corrected upon the issuance of necessary instructions by the electoral authorities. During the registration period, the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) received 83 complaints of irregularities, of which 34 were subsequently submitted to the National Elections Commission. ONUMOZ considers that these complaints should not seriously affect the overall electoral process.

5. After verifying the authenticity of supporting documentation, the National Elections Commission announced on 13 September 1994 that the applications of 12 presidential candidates had been accepted. One application was rejected by the Commission owing to a lack of the required number of endorsing signatures. The Commission accredited 14 political parties and coalitions to participate in the legislative elections. A total of 3,117 candidates will compete for the 250 seats in the National Assembly.

6. Because of the extension of the registration period, the electoral campaign did not begin formally until 22 September, 10 days later than initially planned. Although it started in a calm and constructive atmosphere, the campaign has become marred by an increasing volume of disturbances, inflammatory rhetoric and, in some cases, even physical attacks. In particular, several rallies of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) and the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) and their leaders have been disrupted by clashes between their supporters and militants of opposing parties. ONUMOZ nevertheless believes that these incidents, despite their gravity, have not so far posed a serious threat to the democratic nature and fairness of the electoral process. Some public pronouncements made by certain candidates, however, could cast doubt on their commitment to accept the results of the elections. This is unfortunate and worrying.

7. In paragraph 23 of my previous report (S/1994/1002), I informed the Security Council of the situation regarding the funding of technical assistance for the electoral process and the Trust Fund for Assistance to Registered Political Parties. As of 17 October, the shortfall had still not been fully met. I appeal strongly to donors to honour their commitments and urgently bridge the existing funding gap.

8. The planning and execution of the actual voting presents a formidable challenge to the national electoral authorities and to the United Nations. Many of the organizational and logistical problems encountered during preparations for the verification of the poll have been overcome but there are still major needs in such areas as logistic support to election officials, transportation and communications.

9. ONUMOZ, United Nations agencies operating in Mozambique and non-governmental organizations, together with the national electoral authorities, have cooperated in putting together and executing an elaborate operational plan. During the two-day poll, voters will cast their ballots at approximately 7,300 electoral stations grouped in 2,700 polling sites throughout the country. ONUMOZ will observe and verify the polling and the counting of votes in all provinces with the help of approximately 2,100 United Nations

electoral observers. Of this number, 570 observers will be provided by Member States and 279 will come from various United Nations headquarters. ONUMOZ will contribute 934 observers from its ranks, while the diplomatic community in Maputo and non-governmental organizations operating in Mozambique will second 278 personnel to serve as United Nations electoral observers. ONUMOZ will also work closely with the European Union, which will field 200 observers. In addition, several organizations, including the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Association of European Parliamentarians for Southern Africa, will provide observers, who will be either incorporated in the ONUMOZ electoral teams or assisted, to the extent possible, by the Mission.

10. In paragraph 26 of my previous report (S/1994/1002), I emphasized that the most effective way to enhance the credibility of the elections was to ensure that the Mozambican political parties themselves participated extensively in electoral observation. The Government of the United States of America has funded a programme which was designed by ONUMOZ and which is presently being implemented by the International Republican Institute, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and a non-governmental organization, Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere, Inc. (CARE). This programme, which provides training and financial benefits for up to 35,000 monitors from Mozambican parties, will help to ensure effective observation of the elections by the parties at all polling stations. In a parallel programme funded by the Trust Fund for Assistance to Registered Political Parties, 78 representatives from all of the Mozambican parties are undergoing computer training in order to enable them to verify the processing of election results at both the provincial and national levels.

11. Although the electoral process is generally progressing well, I am concerned that there are still so many uncollected weapons and munitions throughout the country, including in undeclared and so far unverified depots. This problem has been exacerbated by the parties' lack of cooperation in the verification of some military bases and certain police installations, including those of the Quick Reaction Police. I trust that the Government and RENAMO recognize the critical importance of these and other verification activities for the confidence-building which is so vital for the success of the elections. I urge them to honour their commitments and to cooperate with ONUMOZ in implementing its mandate. It will be equally important to pursue this issue after the elections, as a major element in the overall security situation in the country. In addition, the training of the new Mozambique Armed Forces and the upgrading of the national police will need to be vigorously pursued.

III. OBSERVATIONS

12. The people of Mozambique are to be congratulated for maintaining peace in their country and preparing themselves for the presidential and legislative elections which will bring closer the goals of achieving democracy, lasting peace and representative government.

13. There is an obvious risk that political temperatures will rise before and immediately after the poll. Particular caution and statesmanship will be required at this time. I am confident that the people of Mozambique possess the

ability to consolidate peace and stability, especially during the very important transitional period after the elections. I am encouraged by repeated affirmations by FRELIMO, RENAMO and other competing parties of their commitment to the peace process and to a democratic future for Mozambique. It has been clear for the last two years that the resumption of conflict, or any outbreaks of violence or attempts to challenge the results of the elections as verified by ONUMOZ, would provoke a very negative and strong reaction from the people of Mozambique and from the international community.

14. The future of Mozambique lies in the hands of its people and their leaders. I encourage them to maintain a constructive dialogue and to do all that is necessary to ensure that the elections are held in a secure and free atmosphere and that the post-election period will foster peace, stability and national reconciliation. The United Nations will continue to support and facilitate efforts to that end. In particular, efforts must continue to ensure post-electoral harmony by forging a national consensus, if not an agreement, about the democratic future of the country. This goal can only be achieved if account is taken both of the vital interests of all the parties involved in the peace process and of the role they can play in the country's future. The world will be watching Mozambique closely before and after the elections.

15. It will be important for the international community to continue to assist Mozambicans in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of their country. As called upon by the Security Council, I will, in due course, present to the competent bodies of this Organization my recommendations on the future role that the United Nations can play in these areas. Also, in a post-election submission to the Council, I will report on the disposition of the assets of ONUMOZ and on the withdrawal of the Mission, as set forth in paragraphs 34 to 38 of my previous report (S/1994/1002).